

Ashley Post Office
1335 West 2000 North
Vernal
Uintah County
Utah

HABS No. UT-94

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UTAH,
24-VERN
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ASHLEY POST OFFICE

HABS No. UT-94

Location: 1335 West 2000 North, Vernal, Uintah County,
Utah

Present Owner: Uintah County Daughters of the Utah Pioneers

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of
Significance: One of the earliest post offices in eastern
Utah, this hand-hewn, square-notched, log struc-
ture located in the town of Ashley (now Vernal)
also contained a general store. Constructed by
the first postmaster in 1878-79, it continued
to serve as a post office until 1899.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1878-79
2. Architect: Not known
3. Original and subsequent owners:

This log structure is located in the old Ashley
Townsite. There are no block or lot numbers for the
property. The unnumbered lot is located in the
Southwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 4, South
Range 21 East, Salt Lake Meridian. County records
are incomplete and there is no complete chain of
title. The following references to the property are
found in the Uintah County Recorder's Office, Vernal,
Utah:

1965 Deed, signed March 18, 1965, filed June 4, 1965, recorded in Book 123, page 582. Uintah County Daughters of Utah Pioneers bought from Theo Morrison, Robert M. Gray and Linford Batty the following lot: "beginning South along the West section of line 189 feet and South 88°13', East 849.10 feet from West quarter corner, South 66, 22 feet, North 89°43' 50", East 36, 32 feet, North 69.46 feet, North 88°13' West 36, 37 feet to point of beginning.

4. Builder, Contractor, Suppliers, etc.:

Wilbur Carlton Britt built the combination post office and store of logs.

5. Original Plans, Construction, etc.:

There are no existent plans. The rectangular cabin was constructed of native timber from neighboring forests. The logs were smoothed with a broadax on the exterior and interior surfaces and some are numbered for construction. They are square notched but the ends are not cut flush with the wall surface at the corners. The roof was sheathed with boards and covered with approximately 6 inches of dirt. The interior space is divided by a log partition which separates the post office from the store.

6. Alterations and Additions:

In 1965 the building was moved eighteen feet forward

towards the road. The windows in the structure appear to have been altered at one time and since restored to the approximate size of the original windows.

B. Historical Events and Personages connected with the Structure:

Wilbur Carlton Britt, born in Council Bluffs, Iowa in 1849, arrived in Ashley Valley in September of 1876. He began constructing the office and store in 1878 and was appointed the first postmaster on April 16, 1879. He was also the first Justice of the Peace and the first school teacher in Ashley (Vernal).

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and Unpublished Sources:

Deed Books: Uintah County Recorder's Office, Uintah County Courthouse, Vernal, Utah.

Interviews: Mrs. Margaret D. Elisen, Vernal, Utah, June 30, 1975.

Mrs. Thelma Oaks, Vernal, Utah, June 30, 1975.

2. Secondary Sources:

Pamphlets, booklets, newspaper clippings, etc.:

Camp Buena Vista Daughters of Utah Pioneers, comp.

Ashley Valley's First Post Office. Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1974.

Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Uintah County, comp.

Builders of Uintah: A Centennial History of
Uintah County, 1872-1947. Springville, Utah:
Art City Publishing, 1947.

Prepared by: Peter L. Goss, Ph.D.
Architectural Historian
Graduate School of
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University of Utah
Salt Lake City
November 1975

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Frontier log cabin
2. Condition of fabric: good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 17'-6" x 23'-7"
2. Foundations: concrete
3. Wall construction, finish and color: square cut logs,
chinked with suntar.
4. Structural system, framing: wall bearing solid logs,
pole beam rafters with sheathing.
5. Chimneys: brick
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: wood frames and board casing-
plank door and four lite doors, wood thresholds.
 - b. Windows and shutters: double hung - six lite
with board trim both sides, wood stool.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: gable with sod finish

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First floor: plan has two rooms. East room was the post office and the west room was a general store. A door connects the two rooms.

2. Flooring: 1 x 4 T & G in post office and 7½" to 11½" board and 1 x 4 T & G in store.

3. Wall and ceiling finish: exposed rafter and roof sheathing.

4. Trim: plain boards 1 x 4 at doors and windows.

5. Hardware: mortise locksets, brass knobs and bolts, with ogee-shaped top knobs, surface porcelain knobs.

6. Heating: stove

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: rural setting - structure has been moved to present location.

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Salt Lake City
November 1975

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
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ADDENDUM

FOLLOWS

Addendum to:
Ashley Post Office
1335 W. 2000 North
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Uintah County
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